

## Thursday, November 20

Noon – 1:00 p.m. Registration & POWER Luncheon

1:00 p.m. **Welcome, Introductions & Opening Keynote: Communication for Effective Leadership: Charging into the Storms You Face**  
How we lead is as important as who we lead. Leaders who are quick to tackle the issue they face and are energized with optimism get results because the people they serve are energized. Ted will share how to create a collective mindset that will drive your culture, increase engagement, and create a stronger team. This discussion will increase your ability to build capacity and motivate your team. Hundreds of thousands of people listen to Ted's inspirational and practical weekly podcast (The Smart Thinking Podcast) and in this keynote Ted will share the way to increase your own capacity to charge into the storm.

*Learning Objectives:*

- Create a mindset for leading
- Acquire processes for engaging colleagues
- Review strategies for followership

Presenter: **Ted Neitzke**, CEO, Cooperative Education Service Agency 6

*Addresses ICMA Practice Areas 4 Staff Effectiveness; 6 Strategic Leadership; and 14 Communication and Information Sharing*

2:45 – 3 p.m. Break

3:00 – 3:45 p.m. **Wire Fraud in Local Government Projects: Lessons from Chetek**

In October 2023, the City of Chetek was hit by a sophisticated wire fraud scheme that diverted \$2.6 million intended for a critical infrastructure project. While the funds were ultimately recovered, the incident exposed how vulnerable even well-managed municipalities can be to fraud. This session takes you inside Chetek's response—how city officials acted quickly, partnered with banks and federal investigators, and turned a crisis into a catalyst for stronger protections. Municipal leaders and staff will walk away with practical strategies to safeguard community funds, strengthen internal controls, and build resilience before fraud strikes.

*Learning Objectives:*

1. Recognize how fraudsters use spoofed emails and social engineering to target municipal projects
2. Examine Chetek's rapid response with banks, law enforcement, and forensic experts to recover stolen funds
3. Identify practical fraud prevention measures such as dual approvals, two-step verification, and phishing awareness training
4. Develop proactive municipal protocols including contract safeguards and pre-established response plans
5. Understand how transparency, legal counsel involvement, and cultural vigilance build resilience against fraud

Presenter: **Laura Stelzner**, City Administrator/Treasurer, Chetek

*Addresses ICMA Practice Area 11 Technological Literacy*

3:45 – 4:00 Break

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. **Protecting Main Street from Malware: A Cyber Briefing for Busy Leaders**

This session will give you an overview of the current state of cyber threats in the state of Wisconsin, as well as who is being targeted. You will also learn about some of the favorite TTPs (Tactics, Techniques and Procedures) cybercriminals use and Why are they effective. Finally, you will learn about real-world practical tips and strategies that you can use to keep your communities (and yourselves!) safe.

*Learning Objectives:*

- Understand the growing risks of cyber threats in local communities.
- Become more aware of how and why cyber-attacks happen
- Learn practical ways to help prevent cyber attacks

Presenters:

**Karen Arthur**, Cybersecurity Engineer II, Enterprise Infrastructure Security, Northwestern Mutual

*Addresses ICMA Practice Area 11 Technological Literacy*



## Friday, November 21

7:45 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast

### 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. **When Integrity Fails: Identifying and Addressing Internal Fraud in Local Government Operations**

Internal fraud can quietly erode public trust and financial stability within local governments. This session brings together insights from an accounting services manager, a local government administrator, and a representative from the municipal insurance industry to explore the full lifecycle of internal fraud—from early red flags to investigation, prevention, and recovery. Through real-world examples and practical strategies, attendees will learn how to strengthen internal controls, foster a culture of accountability, and respond effectively when fraud is suspected or discovered. Whether you're in finance, administration, or risk management, this session offers actionable guidance to protect your organization and the public resources it stewards.

#### *Learning Objectives:*

- Recognize common red flags and behavioral indicators of internal fraud within local government operations.
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of finance, administration, and insurance professionals in investigating and responding to suspected fraud.
- Explore effective strategies for preventing internal fraud through internal controls, staff training, and organizational culture.
- Learn how to navigate the recovery process, including financial restitution, insurance claims, and rebuilding public trust.

Presenters: **Matt Becker**, President and CEO, League of Wisconsin Municipalities Mutual Insurance

**Nicole Dunbar**, CPA, Accounting Services Manager, KerberRose

**Diane Rowe**, Senior Community Development Administrator, MSA Professional Services

*Addresses ICMA Practice Areas 8 Policy Facilitation and Implementation and 12 Financial Management and Budgeting*

9:30 – 9:45 a.m. Break

### 9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. **How to Navigate a Difficult Situation with Board or Staff**

Managing people and personalities in the public sector is fulfilling and challenging work. At times Administrators, Managers, Department heads and staff will work with individuals whose mindset does not match their own. In these situations, it is important to continuously focus on the goal of moving the organization forward. This session is designed to give you some tools and strategies you can use when you encounter difficult situations and people to help you realign your perspective and keep marching towards your objectives.

#### *Learning Objectives:*

- Talk about the changing landscape in local politics and the world today that makes working in local government more challenging.
- Discuss some strategies for making it easier to work with staff and elected officials.
- Talk through real life scenarios to gain insight into how others are handling more controversial situations.

Presenters: **Steve Sorenson**, von Briesen & Rober, S.C. & **Dianne Robertson**, ICMA/WCMA Senior Advisor

*Addresses ICMA Practice Areas 6 Strategic Leadership and 14 Communication and Information Sharing*

10:45 – 11 a.m. Break

### 11:00 a.m. – Noon **Closing Keynote: The Energy Switch**

Add more, do more, and keep up with every role and expectation put in front of you. That is what it feels like in today's changing world. Awareness of that...is an untapped power. Discover the framework which will switch your reality of chaos and exhaustion toward liveliness, passion, and excitement for what the day will bring. A framework built from theory, experience, and all within your control to keep yourself on the right path and build agile teams.

#### *Learning Objectives:*

- Learn the energy management framework to embrace reality versus fighting it.
- Explore burnout contributors and factors of adaptability.
- Create a practical action plan in a ever-changing world.

Presenter: **Kelly Bubolz**, Speaker/Author/Burnout Guide, KB Training Connections, LLC

*Addresses ICMA Practice Area 5 Personal Resiliency and Development*

